

3-6-2020

## From the Provost: Summer Study Abroad Programs, March 6, 2020

University of Northern Iowa

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### Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa, "From the Provost: Summer Study Abroad Programs, March 6, 2020" (2020). *UNI Response to COVID-19*. 31.

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# University of Northern Iowa

## From the Provost: Summer Study Abroad Programs

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Dear Colleagues,

As you know, we have been following the changing environment of the coronavirus by the moment. One of the major issues we have been discussing here at UNI is our summer study abroad courses, which offer unique learning environments for our students. At UNI, our study abroad programs are different from ISU and SUI in that we do not use outside vendors--and so we incur great financial risk with our programs. Additionally, students who need these courses to graduate incur academic risk if we cancel these programs at a late date.

Based on multiple conversations, including with the Study Abroad office, Deans, and the Board of Regents office, we have made the decision to cancel our study abroad courses for the coming summer. The faculty and students involved in the summer courses have already been notified.

This decision was not made lightly and was done with the best interest of the students and the institution in mind as we work to mitigate the substantial financial and academic risk that we face. Faculty have been asked to work with their department heads and deans to determine next steps to ensure our students continue to have strong learning opportunities and can graduate in a timely fashion.

In challenging times we must recenter ourselves around our core values, including especially student success and diversity and inclusion, hallmarks of our vision, mission, and strategic plan. Staying focused on these values and working transparently and collaboratively will get us through these difficult times. But I would also ask that you take your work a step further and elevate the deep care that we always exhibit on this campus. At this time, we must demonstrate concern for our international students who are affected by the coronavirus in ways that we can't even imagine. Please embrace them and let them know they are important members of our community.

One final thought. I want you to know that we have a remarkable group of dedicated, intelligent, wise, and caring leaders working on this. It has consumed many of them, and I would ask that you show your appreciation for their efforts as well. We are in good hands.

If you have questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Jim Wohlpart